



## Preparedness News and Information

From FEMA's Office of National Preparedness

August 8, 2003

### NATIONAL NEWS

#### **Homeland Border Enforcement Bureau Looks to Cross-Train Agents**

*GovExec, August 4, 2003*

Despite progress in its internal reorganization, the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) still must reconcile differences in training between its two criminal investigation corps.

#### **FBI Changing Counterintelligence Tactics**

*Associated Press, August 3, 2003*

Even as it concentrates on preventing terrorism, the FBI is overhauling its counterintelligence efforts to blunt the threat and agents are less focused on finding spies among diplomats and embassies and more interested in espionage directed at corporations, research centers and universities.

➤ [FBI, CIA Remain Worlds Apart](#), *GovExec*, August 1

#### **U.S. to Urge Greater Airport Scrutiny**

*Associated Press, August 5, 2003*

The government is expected to instruct airport security screeners and state, local and federal law enforcement officers on Tuesday to give greater scrutiny to electronic devices that might be used in a terrorist attack, a federal source said Monday.

➤ [U.S. Warns of Weapons, Bombs Hidden in Electronics](#), *Reuters*, August 5

➤ [FBI Warns of Easily Concealed Weapons](#), *NY Times*, August 6

#### **Fact Sheet: Office of National Capital Region Coordination**

*DHS Press Release, August 5, 2003*

The Office of National Capitol Region Coordination (ONCRC) within the Department of Homeland Security is charged with overseeing and coordinating Federal programs and domestic preparedness initiatives for state, local and regional authorities in the National Capital Region (NCR).

#### **GAO: City Hospitals Lack Equipment to Handle Bioterror Attack**

*GovExec, August 6, 2003*

Most of the country's urban hospitals do not have sufficient resources to handle a sudden surge in patients seeking medical attention because of a bioterrorist attack, according to a [new report](#) from the GAO.

➤ [Hospitals Unprepared for Bio-Attack- Report](#), *Reuters*, August 6

➤ [Report: More Bioterrorism Work Necessary](#), *ABC News*, August 6

## **Bush not Doing Enough to Protect Chemical Plants, Critics Contend**

*GovExec, August 7, 2003*

Despite the Bush administration's public promises and alarms, the White House has taken almost no action to improve security at any of the nation's 15,000 chemical facilities—including chemical manufacturing plants, petroleum tank farms, and pesticide companies—that contain large quantities of potentially deadly chemicals.

## **CONGRESS**

### **Lawmakers Introduce Measures to Dilute Antiterror Bill**

*GovExec, August 4, 2003*

There appears to be a groundswell of opposition to current language in the sweeping anti-terrorism law known as the USA Patriot Act in the passel of bills introduced by lawmakers last week.

### **Homeland's Supporters Advocate Permanence**

*The Hill, August 5, 2003*

Two senior members of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security are spearheading a bipartisan effort to give the panel permanent status after its schedule expiration at the end of the 108th Congress.

### **Lieberman: Merge Terror Lists Soon**

*Federal Computer Week, August 7, 2003*

Sen. Joseph Lieberman this week asked Homeland Secretary Tom Ridge for a timetable for when the Bush administration would consolidate the government's terrorist watch lists.

### **Pilots, Congress Complain about Delays in Arming Pilots**

*Associated Press, August 7, 2003*

Fewer than 100 pilots were certified to carry guns on commercial flights in the eight months after Congress approved the idea, and pilots are blaming the slow pace on the Transportation Security Administration.

➤ [Agency Blamed for Pace in Arming Pilots](#), *Longview News-Journal*, August 7

## **STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES**

### **Panel to Allot Homeland Security Funds**

*Maine Today, August 6, 2003*

A new committee of elected officials and municipal employees in Augusta is forming to decide the best way to spend a \$341,000 federal Homeland Security grant.

### **Crossing Lines to Fight Terrorism**

*Washington Post, August 6, 2003*

Authorities in the District and four large Eastern states plan to launch an anti-terrorism data-sharing effort in September to enable federal, state and local agencies to search instantly through millions of law enforcement records according to Mayor Anthony Williams.

### **Ridge Praises Capital Region's Partnership on Security**

*GovExec, August 5, 2003*

The joint homeland security efforts of Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia should serve as an example for other states looking to build their own homeland security plans, Secretary Tom Ridge said at a Tuesday security briefing.

### **Area Residents Mixed on Incineration Issues**

*Anniston Star, August 6, 2003*

As the startup of the Anniston Army Depot's chemical weapons incinerator loomed, some residents who fear the worst were scurrying Tuesday for last-minute protective equipment, while others who are more laid-back welcomed the beginning of incineration.

### **Homeland Security**

*Richmond.com, August 5, 2003*

Virginia Gov. Mark R. Warner has announced the availability of \$33.7 million in funds to be used to enhance homeland security with cities and counties throughout the state receiving 80 percent of the funds allocated and the remainder going to state and regional level preparedness priorities.

### **Casino Closes for Terror Attack Drills**

*Firehouse.com, August 5, 2003*

The Motor City Casino was closed Tuesday morning, as it became the first casino to participate with the Michigan State Police, Michigan Gaming and Control Board, city of Detroit emergency management, Detroit Homeland Security and other local agencies in a full-scale terrorism preparedness exercise.

### **County Safe at Home**

*The Californian, August 5, 2003*

A nearly \$1 million federal grant will help Monterey County tighten its anti-terrorism security efforts paying for items including two pickup trucks, five trailers for hazardous-materials teams, chemical-agent and radiation-monitoring equipment, protective suits, and decontamination equipment.

### **Senator Clinton Asks FEMA for New Test at Indian Pt.**

*NY Times, August 2, 2003*

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton has asked the Federal Emergency Management Agency to hold another test of the emergency plan at the Indian Point nuclear power plant within six months, monitored by "an independent panel of experts."

## **U.S. Backs Florida's New Counterterrorism Database**

*Washington Post, August 6, 2003*

Police in Florida are creating a counterterrorism database designed to give law enforcement agencies around the country a powerful new tool to analyze billions of records about both criminals and ordinary Americans.

## **Storm Plans Help Plan for Terror Attack**

*Palm Beach Post, August 7, 2003*

Members of the National Emergency Response and Rescue Training Center told a half dozen Palm Beach County mayors Wednesday the hurricane season's annual threat of natural disaster has significantly prepared them for mobilization in the event of a terrorist attack.

## **School Officials get Emergency Training**

*The Gazette, August 7, 2003*

Responding to uncertain times, principals and staff from each Frederick County public school and three private schools completed emergency preparedness training this month.

## **State, Region Urged to Coordinate Anti-terror Actions**

*Post-Gazette, August 7, 2003*

State government agencies need to do a better job working with regional groups when developing counter-terrorism programs, an Allegheny County official told state legislators yesterday.

## **Trenton EMS Continues Work on Emergency Plan**

*Trenton Sun, August 8, 2003*

Trenton's Emergency Management Service has been very busy in the past few months as new volunteers have been recruited through newspaper ads and communication training and storm spotter classes are planned for March and April respectively.

## **MEDS Practice Might Save Your Life**

*Coventry Courier, August 1, 2003*

Coventry officials held a pre-exercise for the Medical Emergency Distribution System (MEDS) as a preliminary test to determine Coventry's capability to vaccinate its population of 33,668 in the unlikely event of a bio-terrorist strike.

## **RELATED INFORMATION**

### **RECENT REPORTS**

- [\*\*Hospital Preparedness: Most Urban Hospitals Have Emergency Plans but Lack Certain Capacities for Bioterrorism Response, GAO-03-924, August 2003\*\*](#)

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The information contained in this newsletter was collected from Internet sources. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the official position of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Office of National Preparedness.